

Chapter 6

Mass Media and National Communications

Stephenie Fu, Melinda Fancher, and Dan Snyder

INTRODUCTION

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) launched its 5 A Day media campaign in July 1992, less than a year after the beginning of the national 5 A Day Program. Since then, NCI and its private-sector partner, the Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH), have coordinated the timing, content, and tone of their media efforts to ensure that they complement one another. By generating national media attention, NCI and PBH have successfully continued to drive consumer awareness of the 5 A Day message. In addition to spearheading national media promotions, NCI tailors its national media materials for its network of 5 A Day State coordinators, thereby ensuring that the public hears the 5 A Day message through several channels, from national newscasts to local newspapers. Likewise, PBH enlists its retail members nationwide to participate in or sponsor 5 A Day activities to reach consumers at points of purchase. Together, through coalitions at the grassroots level, the States and industry members work together to drive home the 5 A Day message. To support the 5 A Day partnership of NCI and PBH, NCI contracted the public relations firm Porter Novelli, which specializes in national public health campaigns and food and nutrition issues. NCI originally contracted for a 3-year term and twice extended the contract by 1

year, for a total of 5 years. Porter Novelli assigned a multidisciplinary team of strategic planners, communications researchers, writers and designers, broadcast producers, and media relations specialists, all with experience in nutrition communications. NCI program officers and communications officers met regularly with the contractors, particularly at the start of a new task, and held annual planning meetings to review overall efforts.

This chapter focuses on how NCI and PBH developed, executed, and refined the 5 A Day media strategies and tactics as the program evolved. It also gives examples of how behavior change models and audience segmentation data have helped program planners develop messages and target their media efforts. The chapter begins by focusing on initial factors that contributed to shaping the 5 A Day media campaign, the role of the national media in the program's success, and the initial research conducted to support the media campaign launch. Subsequent sections present strategies, specific tactics, and the research that formed the foundation for decisions made, as well as lessons learned from each approach. A chronology of the 5 A Day Program's communications research and media activities is in Appendix C.

SHAPING THE 5 A DAY MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Mass media—newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and the Internet—reach large segments of the population and provide a wealth of opportunities to deliver messages that encourage changes in behavior and lifestyle. Research on media effects and agenda-setting has long supported the important role of mass media in determining what we think about and how we perceive issues and health-related behaviors (Siegel and Doner, 1998).

Planning Principles: The Role of Mass Media

The decision to use mass media requires addressing several inherent challenges, including the potential role of paid media versus unpaid media, the need for repetition or frequency of message delivery, and the variations in control of message content from one form of mass media to another.

Paid media, or advertising, necessitates advanced payment to secure a specific place and time in a medium, and although it is costly compared with other types of exposure, it guarantees complete control of the message content to a predetermined audience at a carefully selected time. On the other hand, unpaid media placements, such as news coverage resulting from materials sent to journalists for consideration, are determined by editors, reporters, producers, and other media gatekeepers who determine when, where, and how the information will be conveyed.

Communications research has consistently shown that in addition to being substantially lower in cost than paid media, unpaid media is more credible to consumers, because it is viewed as a core message rather than a commercial (Wilcox et al., 1998). In addition, NCI—a science-based, Government health agency—is a trusted and authoritative source of information about the value of vegetables and fruit in health promotion.

Without a budget to sustain a presence in paid media, and with the advantage of the NCI imprimatur, NCI and PBH decided early on to emphasize delivering their messages through unpaid media placements and to devise strategies that would ensure sufficient frequency. To be effective, messages must be focused and repeated often and consistently over an extended period of time—but with new and updated approaches to keep the target audience interested and engaged (Flay and Burton, 1990; Backer et al., 1992; Hornik, 1997). Message repetition offers several benefits:

- It addresses the fact that all members of the target audience will not be able to see or hear the message at the same time.
- Repeat exposures serve as a reminder, thus reducing the chance that the audience will forget the message.
- It enhances learning, especially of complex or hard-to-assimilate messages.
- It increases the chance of penetrating indifference or resistance to the message.
- It reduces the possibility of message dilution as media channels and the public process the information and pass it on to others (Wilcox et al., 1998).

NCI and PBH have placed a high priority on employing a variety of media approaches to ensure reaching the broadest audience possible with limited resources. They have explored using multiple media vehicles, from news columns and magazine articles to television and radio programming and Web sites.

Initial Program Planning and Research

The 5 A Day Program is an early example of the application of the Consumer-based Health Communications (CHC) and the Stages-of-Change behavior models to a national health education campaign. CHC, adapted from the commercial advertising sector, poses a series of key strategic questions that must be answered to ensure meaningful and relevant communications (Lefebvre et al., 1995). Program planners addressed the set of questions below in order to focus and refine their efforts.

Key Questions To Be Answered in the CHC Planning Process

- What is the purpose of the communication?
- Who is the target?
- What does the communication promise?
- How will the promise be supported?
- What apertures and communications tools will be used?
- What is the nature of the desired behavior change?

In addition to the CHC Planning Model, program planners employed the Stages-of-Change, or Transtheoretical, Model (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1992) in which behavior change is viewed in five phases:

- Precontemplation (in which there is no awareness of the need to change);
- Contemplation (in which the target audience member seeks out information that may lead to behavior change);
- Preparation (in which the target develops strategies and plans to make the change);
- Action (in which the target attempts to change behavior); and
- Maintenance (in which the behavior change continues for an extended period of time).

Since the Program's inception, NCI has employed these models, along with state-of-the-art campaign planning and implementation strategies, when creating and disseminating information to the target audience. The CHC and Stages-of-Change behavior models provide a framework for the 5 A Day Program's strategy and approach, and original research was conducted to begin the planning process before the program launch.

During the initial planning phase, both quantitative and qualitative research was conducted so that program planners could establish baselines and develop strategies for audience segmentation and message development. To help answer the questions posed in the CHC process, program planners needed to quantify the extent of the challenges that the Program needed to address. In August 1991, NCI and PBH jointly fielded a

baseline national telephone survey of approximately 3,000 Americans. This survey revealed that most respondents were eating servings of vegetables and fruit a day, with one out of five eating fewer than two servings daily. The survey also found that only 8 percent of Americans knew that they needed to eat five or more servings a day; the remaining 92 percent were in the precontemplation phase, in which they had no awareness of the need to change their eating habits. This information served as a cornerstone of the Program's national media campaign launch.

In addition to the quantitative study, two qualitative research projects were also conducted before the program launch. The first, in December 1991, used one-on-one interviews to evaluate proposed theme lines and variations. The core message of "Did you know that eating five fruits and vegetables is one of the most important choices you can make to help maintain your health?" was tested, along with rotated variations that included: "to stay healthy," "to protect your health," "for your health," and "to improve your health." The purpose of this pretest was to determine how well the theme lines were understood, whether they were believable, and whether they had the power to motivate. Findings from the interviews indicated that the theme lines were believable and that adding the words "to help" strengthened the messages. Overall, the theme lines were found to communicate clearly the message that vegetables and fruit are important for good health. With refinements based on the findings, these theme lines were used in the program's first year.

In another formative research project, NCI conducted focus groups in April 1992 to help program planners select methods to assist consumers in moving from contemplation to preparation to action, using the Stages-of-Change Model. Communications strategists sought to find ways in which vegetables and fruit could easily fit into consumers' daily routines, identify benefits and barriers to increasing consumption, and explore reactions to 5 A Day Program concepts.

Behavioral theory indicates strongly that increased knowledge and understanding alone do not motivate a person to change. Other factors, such as self-efficacy, skills to implement the change (e.g., cooking a new kind of food), convenience, and social and cultural mores all influence the decision to change (Mailbach and Cotton,

1995). Generally, participants found the idea of eating five servings of vegetables and fruit a day to be a reasonable goal, but they also cited lack of convenience, boring presentations of vegetables and fruit at meals, and the varying quality of produce as barriers.

The results of each of these research studies were used to plan and implement the 5 A Day Program launch and to create a foundation for future measurement and evaluation. The national survey provided an accurate picture of the breadth of the challenge regarding low vegetable and fruit consumption among Americans and revealed the levels of respondents' awareness within the Stages-of-Change behavior model continuum. It also became an important baseline measurement tool for longitudinal analysis of the program's success. As a qualitative tool, focus groups and indepth interviews provided useful, detailed insights into perceptions, motivations, and current orientation toward the issue and thus provided guidance in determining the best ways to communicate information.

The following sections provide information on how these research results were applied to Program implementation.

LAUNCHING THE 5 A DAY MEDIA CAMPAIGN

With the launch of the 5 A Day national media campaign, NCI and PBH made an immediate, national impact and established relationships with key media outlets, both of which were critical objectives for the launch. This section highlights communications research and media tactics employed in the first few years of the campaign.

The Launch News Conference

NCI worked with its communications firm, Porter Novelli, to launch its media campaign with a national news conference in Washington, D.C., on July 1, 1992. The existence of hard news in the form of results from the baseline survey helped attract the media. These results pointed to the need to increase awareness of the recommendation to eat five or more servings of vegetables and fruit a day. NCI secured high-level speakers to kick off the media cam-

paign, including then-Secretary of Health and Human Services, Louis Sullivan, M.D.; then-Director of the National Institutes of Health, Bernadine Healy, M.D.; then-Director of NCI's former Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, Peter Greenwald, M.D.; and Bruce Obbink, Director of the California Table Grape Commission and chair of the PBH board of directors. To provide an additional news angle and expand media coverage, Porter Novelli secured a sports star with appeal to a large segment of the consumer audience, Olympic swimming gold medalist Matt Biondi, then a highly visible celebrity. Biondi videotaped a 5 A Day message for broadcast at the news conference and a message for television stations nationwide.

Porter Novelli also created a comprehensive media kit for the launch to provide reporters with a comprehensive resource to develop news stories. The kit contained

- The announcement news release;
- A backgrounder on the program and partnering organizations;
- Two booklets that summarized the baseline survey and epidemiological studies supporting the benefits of eating more vegetables and fruit;
- A list of retail contact names so that reporters could speak with industry representatives about their roles in the program;
- "Infographics" illustrating the results of the baseline survey; and
- A computer disk with digitized versions of the infographic and print materials.

NCI developed demonstration booths with interactive displays to address concerns revealed in formative research, and following the news conference, reporters visited the booths to cull information for their stories. Core messages reflected at the booths were:

- **5 A Day—Isn't That a Lot of Food?** This booth provided demonstrations of serving sizes to illustrate that a 5 A Day serving recommendation is less than most people think.
- **Through the Day With 5 A Day.** This booth offered samples of serving options to demonstrate how easily five servings can be incorporated throughout the day.

- **5 A Day the Low-Fat Way.** To emphasize the role of vegetables and fruit in a healthful, low-fat diet and capitalize on the interest in low-fat cooking, this booth offered a photo opportunity with Dr. Louis Sullivan preparing a low-fat 5 A Day recipe.
- **5 A Day on the Go.** To illustrate that eating away from home does not preclude 5 A Day, this booth offered tips for dining out the 5 A Day way.
- **Who Has Time To Cook 5 A Day?** This booth offered tips on how to overcome concerns about preparation time, including use of microwave ovens.

The news conference and followup mailing of the complete media kit reached more than 3,000 media outlets and made an immediate, wide-spread impact. During the month of July 1992 alone, the 5 A Day Program generated more than 1,800 media placements, which accounted for securing approximately 122 million gross media impressions (the combined audience reached via print and broadcast placements). Key national placements included “Good Morning America,” “CBS This Morning,” “ABC World News Tonight,” “CNN Headline News,” the Associated Press, *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, CNN Radio, and ABC Radio Network.

Establishing Ongoing Media Contact

NCI, PBH, and Porter Novelli worked together and developed a strategy to ensure that the 5 A Day Program’s introduction to media nationwide was sustained well beyond its initial launch. In the fall of 1992, Porter Novelli arranged desk-side briefings during which an NCI content expert and an NCI communications representative made personal visits to discuss the Program one-on-one with food editors and writers of 15 national magazines at their own offices. Monthly magazines generally have a 6-month lead time between story development and publication; consequently, stories about the 5 A Day message began to appear the following year in magazines such as *Glamour*, *Working Mother*, *Essence*, and *Cooking Light*.

To further increase exposure, Porter Novelli created and distributed a quarterly, four-color media newsletter, ensuring that food reporters nationwide received new 5 A Day updates and story ideas on an ongoing basis. The first newsletter was timed to

coincide with the national news conference and featured results of the baseline survey, story ideas, and tools to shape stories, such as recipes, sidebar tips, infographics, photos, and illustrations. NCI also included a computer disk that contained all of the newsletter’s text and images. With the status of printing technology at that time, the disk was an innovative and helpful way to increase the ability of publications to meet production needs in a timely manner and as cost-effectively as possible.

Anticipating the importance of technology in expanding media exposure, the 5 A Day Program partners were among the first to push forward on the new media front. Porter Novelli created the Digital News Service (DNS) to facilitate greater media usage of program materials. Through DNS, NCI offered online 5 A Day graphics and story ideas as early as 1993. This innovative distribution system cut the media’s costs dramatically and reduced distribution time to seconds. Today, the Internet makes information and images instantly available, rendering DNS unnecessary. NCI continues to provide media with information, graphics, and photos on computer disks and offers downloadable material via its Web site.

Securing Additional Support

In the process of clearly delineating roles to avoid duplication of effort, the 5 A Day Program partners decided that PBH was well suited to enlist support from opinion influencers and to engage partner organizations, which in turn would be likely and able to generate media interest. For example, as part of its holiday Gift of Health theme in 1992, PBH obtained 25,000 pounds of vegetables and fruit from retailers, with which it created the world’s largest cornucopia (later donated to food banks) and staged a Chicago event featuring local politicians and the leader of a national food bank organization. The cornucopia served as a grand-scale, visual-media draw, which garnered extensive coverage. In another example, PBH partnered with the National Football League (NFL) in 1993 to call attention to the 5 A Day Program by working with the trainers of the 28 NFL teams to include five servings of vegetables and fruit per player in their daily training tables. The novelty of the NFL connection yielded heavy media coverage, with the added benefit of demonstrating a new content element—that the toughest of professional athletes incorporate the 5 A Day recommendations into their daily discipline.

Identifying the Target Audience— Research's Next Task

After the campaign media launch, the 5 A Day Program required development of more targeted messages and the identification of effective media interventions. The application of the CHC model relied heavily on continuous consumer research to provide the strategic and creative framework (Lefebvre et al., 1995). The CHC model questions aided in the development of activities and messages that foster the desired behavior change of eating more daily servings of vegetables and fruit. Some of the CHC questions were addressed by research conducted in the planning stages of the campaign, and other questions were pursued after the initial launch.

To address various aspects of audience segmentation and message design, NCI accessed a database from the Marketing Research Corporation of America (MRCA) Information Services, Inc., that linked information on demographics, food consumption, dietary habits, attitudes, interests, media habits, and other lifestyle factors. NCI defined the initial target group as Americans who reported having increased their consumption of vegetables and fruit but were currently eating fewer than five servings a day—in short, interested people not yet maintaining the desired behavior change. Members of the control group were already eating five or more servings a day.

To further define the target audience, NCI placed one question on the 1992 Lifestyle Survey, an annual mail-panel survey of more than 4,000 Americans conducted by DDB Needham, an international advertising agency. The NCI question asked respondents how many servings of vegetables and fruit they had consumed the previous day. The MRCA data and the Lifestyle Survey data reinforced each source's respective findings and showed that the 5 A Day target audience led busy, hectic lives with little spare time. Regarding food, these people were less likely than other segments of the population to have traditional eating patterns, and taste and convenience were important food characteristics to them. In addition, they cut corners when preparing meals, and they were ridden with anxiety concerning nutrition.

These findings formed the foundation of the core message strategy for the 5 A Day target audience. The message strategy is to increase self-

efficacy and skills by teaching the target audience how to “add two or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day ‘the easy way’ instead of making it hard.” When the desired change (adding servings) is seen as easy, the target audience finds making the behavior change less of an effort (Strecher et al., 1986).

To support this core message, the following easy sample actions—or recommended tips—have appeared in materials for various NCI and PBH promotions:

- **Breakfast:** Have fruit and/or 100-percent juice every day.
- **Snack:** Have a fruit and/or vegetable every day.
- **Stock Up:** Keep dried, frozen, and/or canned fruits and vegetables to prevent running out midweek.
- **Keep It Visible:** Keep fruits and vegetables within easy view on countertops and tables and in the refrigerator.
- **Preparation:** Use your microwave to have vegetables for dinner the 5-minute way.

MAINTAINING MEDIA INTEREST AND MONITORING RESULTS

Since the media launch, NCI and PBH have monitored media coverage closely to ensure that their strategic approach to media outreach remains fresh. Given the Program's constant, unchanging, and simple message, it is important to find new angles to keep reporters interested and active in delivering key messages and information to consumers. This section focuses on two specific approaches—National 5 A Day Week and seasonal media outreach—and provides examples of methods employed to evaluate and track the success of program efforts.

National 5 A Day Week: National and State Efforts

In September 1993, NCI and PBH launched National 5 A Day Week, an annual event to motivate consumers to try eating five daily servings of vegetables and fruit throughout the week so that they can see how easy it can be to incorporate these changes into their eating patterns. Since

then, National 5 A Day Week has continued to make an impact on consumers through NCI representatives communicating to print and broadcast media outlets, a national media mailing, and multimedia public service announcements (PSAs) (see Text Box), as well as through PBH's success in

"Three's a Great Start, The Next Two Are Easy!" PSA Campaign

To assess the target audience's reactions to finished print PSA materials, the 5 A Day Program has conducted one-on-one interviews in which consumers are intercepted in shopping malls; screened for interest, willingness, and other criteria; and brought to a research facility within the mall. One-on-one interviews allow the program to show finished materials to members of the target audience in geographically diverse locations and provide an opportunity to collect reactions and thoughts about the materials before publication. Participants are queried on several key topics, including their first thoughts and feelings after seeing the materials, comprehension, believability, general appeal, and what actions they are likely to take as a result of seeing the materials. One-on-one interviews provide a more accurate sense of the communications effectiveness of specific materials than focus groups do, because they prevent respondents' reactions from being influenced by other individuals.

As an example, NCI conducted mall-intercept interviews in 1994 to test a new message concept conveyed via a print PSA, "Three's a Great Start, The Next Two Are Easy! The theme line addressed the fact that the target audience feels pressed for time while trying to incorporate more vegetables and fruit into the day. The four-color illustration supporting the theme demonstrated the upbeat, light-hearted approach the Program has tried to maintain. Findings from this research indicated that a strong majority of respondents quickly identified the theme and message of the PSA. In addition, the target audience liked the illustration and found it attention-getting or visually interesting, and a majority said it motivated them to increase their vegetable and fruit consumption.

Following the testing and final production of the PSA print campaign, NCI scheduled meetings with production managers at major magazines to establish relationships with them by listening to their opinions and needs and encouraging them to use the PSAs. Since then, NCI's print PSA campaigns have experienced considerable usage, with various PSAs appearing beyond the years in which they were distributed in a number of national magazines, including *McCall's*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Child*, and *Business Week*.

securing proclamations by governors from all 50 States and support through other nonmedia influencer channels. NCI and PBH have adopted the umbrella theme, Take the 5 A Day Challenge. Each September, both sponsors offer new story angles to encourage media coverage of National 5 A Day Week.

Themes and theme graphics used for National 5 A Day Week have reflected findings from consumer research, highlighting cue words that are included to resonate with the target audience. For example, *The Original Fast Food* theme and graphic were created to emphasize the ease and convenience that vegetables and fruit offer to the harried target audience, who want to eat nutritiously but have little time to plan. Additionally, the *3's a great start. The next 2 are easy!* theme and graphic spoke directly to the target audience's current average level of consumption. This approach praised them for their progress and encouraged them to add two more vegetable and fruit servings with ease.



Tactical assessments from year to year have proven helpful in honing the media approach. For example, after producing video news releases (VNRs) for 2 years in a row, NCI reviewed television use of them and found that most coverage did not include footage from the VNRs. Therefore, NCI discontinued their use. In the following years, television stations received B-roll packages (broadcast-quality tape containing generic video images and sound bites from NCI content experts). Television stations can use these to develop their own stories without hav-



ing to incur the time, effort, and expense of deploying a camera crew. The NCI B-roll included footage of supermarket produce sections and consumers shopping in store aisles containing frozen, canned, and dried vegetables and fruit, as well as footage of people eating the 5 A Day Way. The B-rolls are much less expensive to produce and distribute than are VNRs, yet their media use has been comparable or even greater. Consequently, NCI has determined that it will produce VNRs only when warranted by a special, hard news angle.

In order to maximize media approaches and ensure that they are as widespread and diverse as possible, NCI and PBH also have made concerted efforts to prepare State coordinators and industry for each National 5 A Day Week promotion. Although the State coordinators may have limited resources, they are committed to supporting national media efforts and spreading the 5 A Day message to media and consumers in their communities. The 5 A Day Challenge concept has been successfully adapted at the local level, offering ample opportunities for creative implementation with media and consumers alike.

Each year, NCI and PBH have provided advance copies of national media and retailer materials to State coordinators and 5 A Day licensees. These include fill-in-the-blank news releases that States can tailor for their communities' needs, detailed tips and ideas for localizing the 5 A Day challenge, and graphics that can be used to produce media and community intervention materials. The States create specific community activities based on the national theme, providing a hometown feel to the promotional week and to the media story. They often offer local experts for interviews and hold community events in schools and other venues. Although NCI has lacked the resources to measure the impact of these localized efforts, the anecdotal evidence suggests that they generate significant awareness.

Seasonal Media Outreach

To extend the message beyond the launch period, National 5 A Day Week, and other special events, NCI has developed seasonal print media packages to generate coverage throughout the year. The proven strategy capitalizes on existing media windows—holidays or seasons—by providing creative information, tips, and graphics for newspaper reporters to use in related stories.

For example, the first seasonal media package was designed in 1995 to coincide with the winter holidays and the New Year, a time when reporters look for new and different ways to cover these annual events. NCI conducted a brief survey by adding a few questions to a shared-cost, omnibus telephone survey to determine consumers' New Year's resolutions regarding eating habits. NCI used the results to create a newsworthy package containing a press

release, tips for eating five servings of vegetables and fruit a day throughout the holidays, recipes, and infographs that concisely and creatively summarized the New Year's resolutions data. By the end of 1998, NCI (in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) was able to launch a new Web site in time for the fitness-minded public to welcome the New Year. The site featured a dynamic, interactive component that provided tailored tips according to the level of vegetable and fruit consumption and physical activity entered into a chart by the visitor.



Source: National Cancer Institute.



NCI uses blast fax contact—sending three- to four-page faxes containing a news release, tips, and recipes—to send its seasonal 5 A Day materials to a carefully selected and up-to-date list of the top 800 food and health newspaper editors who have expressed an interest in the topic. Reporters interested in the story idea and interested in receiving the infographs digitally request a computer disk or download them via the Web site. NCI ensures that the targeted media receive the materials well in advance, around the time that reporters are beginning to develop angles for their seasonal stories, so that they can incorporate 5 A Day messages into their stories for the holidays. Examples include healthful New Year's resolutions and quick and convenient summertime eating. The request system enables NCI to reduce costs by sending disks only on demand and opens the opportunity for dialog with reporters to further discuss the story ideas and gauge the type of coverage planned.

NCI's seasonal packages have accomplished the objective of garnering immediate placements at a relatively low cost. Newsclip tracking conducted by Porter Novelli showed that the total circulation from newspaper-alone coverage has ranged between 4 to 10 million readers per package promotion.

Research Activities To Guide Program Planning

Additional research projects have been employed to evaluate and track the success of the 5 A Day Program's media campaign. These projects, described below, include media content analysis studies, participation in an omnibus survey, a research audit, and target audience analysis.

Media Content Evaluation

To assess the impact and usage of media tactics and materials, Porter Novelli's communications research staff conducted media content analyses called MASH, or Media Analysis System for Health. The MASH studies employ standard content analysis methodology using coding structures, trained readers, data collection, tabulation of the coding sheets, and an analysis of findings. Several MASH studies have been conducted, including one in 1993, two in 1994, one in 1995, and one in 1998. Findings not only have helped evaluate the effectiveness of media outreach but also have identified campaign elements that

needed retooling. For example, the media analysis conducted in October 1993 provided an assessment of topics and messages communicated in the campaign's initial activities. The analysis examined media placements between July 1992 and October 1993; 7,625 news article clips were received, resulting in a total yield of 396,136,875 consumer impressions.

The 1993 MASH study showed that the majority of coverage was linked to the July Program launch, to press kits provided to the media throughout the year, and to miscellaneous materials provided by NCI. However, the study also indicated that only 10 percent of the total print articles were generated from Porter Novelli's quarterly media newsletters. Anecdotal information from reporters indicated that they tended to file the newsletters, using them as reference materials for future stories. In this capacity, the newsletters did not appear to generate sufficient immediate coverage of the 5 A Day message, and they were eventually replaced with media materials supporting specific events and seasonal campaign activities.

Omnibus Surveys To Track Change

To measure and track awareness of the 5 A Day Program, NCI adds questions to an omnibus survey, a shared-cost study in which different organizations—including Government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private-sector companies—place questions on a variety of topics into a single telephone survey conducted among a nationally representative sample of 1,000 respondents. Omnibus surveys are conducted once or twice annually by independent research companies so that data quickly are available. Periodic participation in these cost-effective surveys has allowed the program to collect longitudinal data on awareness of the program and on knowledge of key program messages.

NCI first participated in an omnibus survey 2 weeks after the initial media event in 1992. NCI placed 15 questions on the survey, with many questions replicating those of the 1991 baseline survey. Since that first survey, NCI has asked questions that query respondents primarily about their awareness of 5 A Day and their knowledge of the Program's central message—that one should eat five or more servings of vegetables and fruit daily for good health. Since 1995, NCI has participated in such surveys three times a year

during March, July, or August (pre-5 A Day Week) and during the last week of September (post-5 A Day Week). The surveys have shown that general awareness has more than quadrupled since the baseline survey, increasing from 8 percent in 1991 to 35 percent in 1999. Awareness of the Program message among women has increased from 11 to 50 percent (see "5 A Day Message Awareness" in Chapter 7).

Research Audit

In the fall of 1995, NCI created a report that outlined all research conducted in support of the 5 A Day Program since the 1991 baseline survey. This document, titled *5 A Day Research Audit* (Porter Novelli, 1995), provided a single source of information for the key findings from the numerous studies conducted for the 5 A Day Program. The compilation of this information has served as a useful internal quick-reference tool for program planners, documenting changes in awareness and behavior and indicating areas that need additional emphasis.

Target Audience Segmentation Analysis

During 1995, NCI participated in a national audience segmentation survey called Healthstyles. This was a survey based on 2,967 responses to two separate questionnaires mailed to a nationally representative sample of approximately 4,000 American adults. Conducted by Porter Novelli, Healthstyles provided the first segmentation analysis of seven distinct population segments based on core health behaviors and attitudes. These profiles were created with a blend of demographic and behavioral measures and assessed media use, habits, and health status, providing a more detailed picture of the target audience. This additional information was used to guide message development and refine the program's media outreach strategy.

5 A DAY ON THE RADIO: INCREASING MESSAGE REPETITION

Once the presence of the 5 A Day Program was firmly established in print media (national magazines, major daily newspapers, and local weekly newspapers), NCI sought to extend the reach of

the Program by capitalizing on opportunities offered by broadcast media. Although NCI had continued to garner continuous coverage in print media, the 5 A Day message had been largely unheard on the airwaves.

Television and radio programming offer several advantages:

- They reach much larger audiences than possible through print media.
- They create a year-round media presence.
- Production of finished programming materials precludes editors, reporters, and producers from altering the content so that the 5 A Day message is broadcast intact.
- They allow additional exposure, which contributes to repetition, or frequency, among the target audiences.
- Compared with print media, programming can reach the target audience at different times of the day.

NCI decided to develop radio programming because its production costs were significantly lower than those for television. NCI searched for a “food personality” to feature in the radio programming. The selection criteria for this personality included the following:

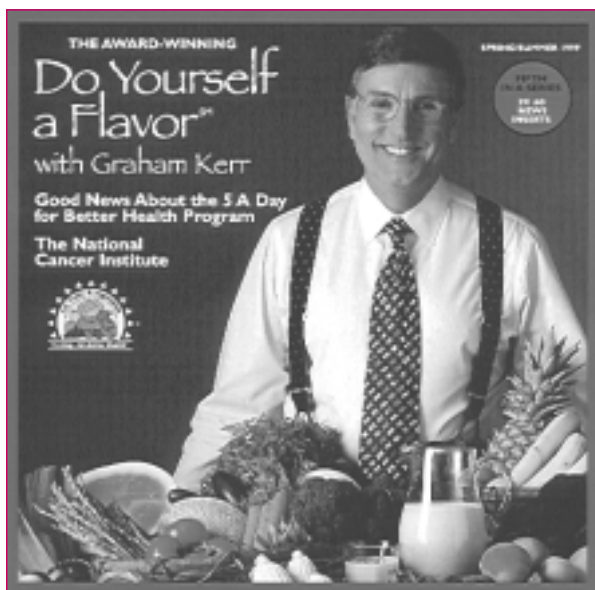
- The person must be widely respected for his or her application of sound nutrition principles.
- He or she must be highly visible among media and consumers.
- He or she must be committed to communicating the 5 A Day message.
- The person must be experienced in broadcast programming.

After an extensive review of potential candidates, Porter Novelli secured Graham Kerr, one of the most respected and well-known food and healthful cooking authorities in broadcasting. In addition to Kerr’s television cooking programs focusing on nutrition and healthful food preparation, he already was an advocate of building meals around vegetables and fruit. With Kerr, Porter Novelli created a pilot series of 60-second radio news inserts that radio station news directors could use as programming, sell to sponsors, or insert into news broadcasts. Employing the Stages-of-Change behavioral model theory concept that convenience and self-efficacy/skills are

critical to behavior change, the spots emphasized that increasing consumption is easy and within anyone’s cooking abilities. The 60-second segments contained quick preparation tips and, in some cases, abbreviated recipes (or “recitips”) to give consumers easy methods to increase their vegetable and fruit consumption.

Porter Novelli tested the pilot content delivery with consumers and the content and concept as a whole with radio station gatekeepers (news directors or programming directors). The one-on-one interviews were conducted among 140 adults in 5 markets to gauge consumer reactions to the radio spots. Study results showed that respondents clearly understood the call to action to eat more vegetables and fruit and that the spots motivated them to increase their vegetable and fruit consumption. The pilot spots then were tested with 60 radio stations in 6 media markets—small to large—nationwide. The stations included those with formats that had a 5 A Day target audience listenership (for example, all news and easy listening, based on data from the Healthstyles survey). Radio programmers were asked to react to the format and content of the news inserts and to determine whether they intended to air spots like NCI’s news inserts. Porter Novelli also called a small sample of program directors to conduct informal interviews and to gauge their reactions.

Following the positive responses of consumers and radio program directors, NCI and Porter Novelli worked with Graham Kerr to produce “Do Yourself a Flavor with Graham Kerr,” a full flight of 39 radio news inserts (3 per week for the 13-week media quarter) packaged on a compact disk. NCI launched the 3-month flight for use during the spring and summer months of 1997. Using data from the Healthstyles survey, combined with feedback from the pilot test, NCI sent the news inserts to certain radio stations. They were selected based on two criteria: 1) a predetermination that the target audience was receptive to the station’s on-air format and 2) that the stations were predisposed or likely to air the spots. The most viable formats included all news, adult contemporary, easy listening, all talk, full service, and classical. The launch flight and the following flights included a business reply card incorporated into the packaging of each compact disk so that radio station contacts could conveniently send feedback and describe how and when they were airing the news inserts.

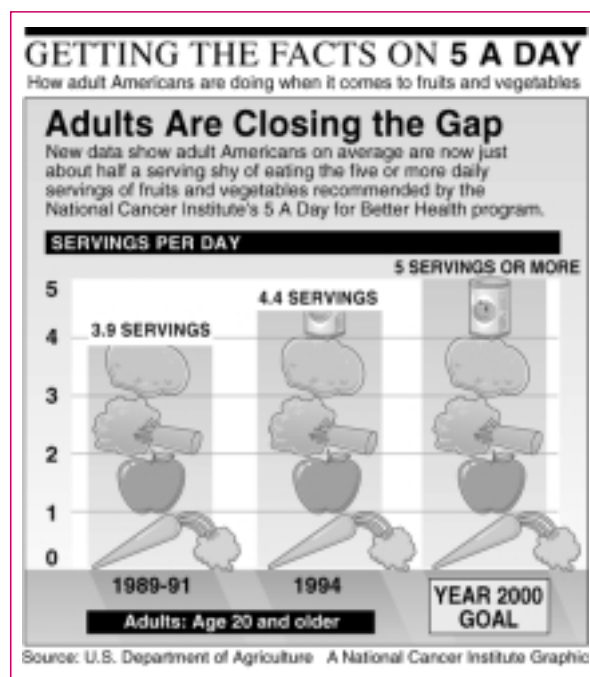


Although radio usage is difficult to track and quantify, the business reply cards and followup telephone calls showed that the series has enjoyed extensive exposure. As of February 2000, more than 450 radio stations in 40 States regularly use “Do Yourself a Flavor,” with daily to weekly airings. The stations receive enough new news inserts every 3 months to air three different segments per week. The total usage across the country includes three nationally syndicated programs and stations in major media markets such as New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Dallas, Houston, Cleveland, Phoenix, and Pittsburgh. In addition, the series is airing on the CBS Radio Network and Associated Press Broadcast Services, which together offer an additional 870 stations that could air the series.

THE IMPORTANCE OF “NEW” NEWS

Through the years, NCI has successfully generated media interest in the 5 A Day message by creating media hooks and creative angles. However, nothing surpasses hard news in generating the heightened media coverage that increases awareness. In 1997, NCI released new data showing that the average adult had increased consumption of vegetables and fruit to about four-and-a-half servings a day. Data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s

Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals showed that by 1994, adults had increased their daily consumption to approximately 4.4 daily servings (excluding french fries), about half a serving lower than the recommended 5 A Day level. The data also showed that although adults were doing better, children’s intake of vegetables and fruit (3.4 daily servings in 1994) was still well below the recommendations set at the start of the program (Porter Novelli news release, March 17, 1997).



Although this news was enough to generate media interest, NCI decided to release the information during National Nutrition Month in March, a time when reporters are particularly interested in nutrition news. National Nutrition Month is spearheaded annually by the American Dietetic Association (ADA), which launches a new consumer promotion each year to communicate the importance of sound nutrition. Porter Novelli arranged for the NCI 5 A Day Program director to brief ADA’s national spokespeople prior to releasing the data because these spokespeople often are among the first resources that the media contact while developing nutrition-related stories. As part of the briefing with NCI, ADA spokespeople received NCI’s embargoed news release and background media materials. NCI also briefed the 5 A Day State coordinators so that they had the

information in hand by the time the news embargo was lifted, positioning them to reach out to their local media for coverage. Porter Novelli also conducted a widespread outreach effort to broadcast and print media nationwide, heavily focusing on national media outlets for maximum reach.

The media responded to the new data in force. Porter Novelli secured national media interviews and placements that resulted in a total reach of nearly 50 million—the biggest audience reach from a single media effort in the life of the program, second only to the media campaign launch—through national television news, national news weeklies, women’s magazines, and national radio networks. The data showed that although Americans were well on their way to meeting the year 2000 goal, important work remained to be done.

LESSONS LEARNED

NCI has been monitoring the results of the 5 A Day Program efforts since the inception of the media campaign, in addition to applying collective experience gained through years of Program management. Several observations and conclusions have been made that would benefit other program planners. The most notable conclusions are listed below.

- **Your own expert can be more valuable than a celebrity to the media.** High-ranking Government officials can be more valuable to the media than celebrities, particularly when there is a hard news angle. A review of national media launch coverage showed that officials such as Dr. Louis Sullivan were included in coverage far more often than sports celebrity Matt Biondi, who was the video focal point of the initial campaign. In the years since the program’s media launch, NCI has found that although celebrities help generate interest in softer news or promotions, journalists tend to request NCI officials for interviews.
- **Media events can play an important role in driving awareness.** The role of news conferences in reaching the target audience was very valuable. The first omnibus survey showed that the percentage of individuals who were aware of the recommended number of servings

increased from 8 percent during the baseline period to 22 percent immediately following the national media campaign launch. There was a corresponding decline from 34 to 15 percent in those who thought one or fewer servings was appropriate.

- **Although viewed by some as a time-worn tactic, annual motivational campaigns like National 5 A Day Week provide the media with a reason to write about key health promotion messages.** This approach uses behavioral theory for both journalists and the consumers that they reach. It appeals to the journalist’s desire for a convenient, fresh twist on an old story and addresses the consumer’s desire for convenience, reinforcing social norms (“Everyone is trying 5 A Day this week”) and increasing self-efficacy. Supplying fresh, creative media angles and new supporting themes each year keeps the media and consumers interested. For example, in 1998, the theme was Taste a World of Variety; NCI’s media materials featured tips and recipes from various cultures within the United States that influence American food trends. NCI secured nationally prominent chefs (including Madhur Jaffrey, Douglas Rodriguez, and Mai Pham, each famous for mastering a specific international cuisine) to offer demonstrations and skills-building tips at media events and to give interviews during National 5 A Day Week. These creative approaches keep the annual promotion interesting for both the media and consumers. On average, National 5 A Day Week yields about 25 million consumer impressions a year through media outreach efforts.
- **Ongoing media contact is critical for maintaining interest in the 5 A Day Program.** Journalists are supportive of the 5 A Day message because it is credible, authoritative, and positive in content and tone, yet they need new reasons to cover what many consider an old message. It is important to provide reporters with a steady stream of real news and fresh angles to the program. Additionally, the ability to offer useful information on a regular basis provides Program planners with the opportunity to recontact reporters, thereby building rapport and trust.

- **Ongoing evaluation of media tactics is critical to ensure effectiveness and cost-efficiency.** The media coverage analysis was revealing in determining which elements reporters found most useful among the media materials. Ongoing monitoring of usage indicated that although reporters valued the quarterly newsletters, they were not necessarily motivated to use them upon receipt—many saw the quarterly publications as resources to use in the future. This was an important issue because NCI needed a more effective vehicle to encourage ongoing, timely media coverage for message repetition, and the newsletters were fairly costly to produce. Given these considerations, NCI decided to discontinue production of the newsletter, while retaining elements from it that the analyses indicated were most useful to the media.
- **For long-range social marketing campaigns, compiling research findings provides a helpful reference tool for planners, researchers, and others.** By 1995, the 5 A Day Program had amassed a large body of research. The 1995 research audit resulted in a single publication in which key findings from focus groups, surveys, and mall-intercept interviews were presented. This audit document also published trend data on awareness of the Program and knowledge of the Program's key messages. The audit itself helped ensure that findings and statistics were reported accurately.
- **Programs need, and can greatly benefit from, long-range planning.** In the case of the 5 A Day Program, planning for radio programming began in 1995 then led to research in 1996, enabling NCI to refine the product and distribute the first set of final Program segments in 1997. For Program planners working with outside consultants, it is critical to consider the length of the consultant's contract and to ensure that the contract reflects a long-term commitment, such as the 5-year contract NCI established with its communications firm, Porter Novelli. NCI was able to take the time necessary to ensure that the final product would reflect careful planning, research, refinement, final execution, and continued refinement throughout subsequent distributions.
- **Dedicated programming is a method for ensuring that messages are conveyed accurately.** Most broadcast media relations tools (e.g., news releases or television B-rolls) enable reporters to shape Program materials into their own stories. The resulting story can be fractured or incomplete and sometimes can contain incorrect messages. Unlike news coverage, dedicated programming, such as NCI's radio news inserts, ensures content control. By sending out prerecorded radio segments that are timed to suit radio stations' needs, NCI has been able to ensure that consumers receive the official 5 A Day message.
- **In a media campaign, meeting the media's needs is just as important as meeting consumers' needs.** Developing messages and materials that meet both the public's needs and the needs of the media that reach them can be a challenge. However, keeping this challenge in mind is key to ensuring that the intended messages eventually reach the consumer. The messages must first appeal to the media if they are ever to reach the consumer. Information must be newsworthy, and delivery of the information must comport with the media's time constraints.
- **Hard news is critical to generating significant media coverage.** Although some reporters will respond to feature ideas, all reporters want news. Trend data are one type of news information that will garner significant interest. The media's continued interest in and support of the 5 A Day message results in solid coverage; however, NCI still needs compelling new information to meet the media's need for new consumption data and other hard news.
- **Briefing key media resources helps ensure the dissemination of the most current information.** The media turns to its regular resources for perspective and for guidance. To take advantage of this established practice, a program's media campaign should make every effort to keep media contacts updated on new developments and information so that journalists always receive the most current information. With 5 A Day, NCI and PBH have been forwarding information to ADA's national spokespeople, with whom reporters keep in contact and interview on a wide range of food

and nutrition issues. By keeping the spokespeople updated on news and promotions, NCI can ensure that a cadre of regular food and health media sources have all the facts necessary to provide the most current information as the need arises.

LOOKING AHEAD

As the 5 A Day Program continues to mature, NCI and PBH increasingly will need to deal with the challenges of maintaining the media's interest and ensuring continuing coverage of the importance of vegetable and fruit consumption. NCI's radio efforts have proven to be extremely successful in sending controlled messages to consumers through the media and in achieving the goal of increasing repetition of the 5 A Day message. The next step was to explore opportunities to create a similar type of programming for television, the leading information source for most consumers.

NCI tested pilot samples of television news inserts designed to air in conjunction with local news coverage. The test inserts received positive feedback from news directors at television stations across the country. As a result, NCI produces a series of "Do Yourself a Flavor" news inserts that are distributed nationwide and aired on a weekly basis. With ongoing television programming, radio programming, newspaper and magazine outreach, and interactive Web-based efforts, the 5 A Day Program is well positioned to reach the public through multiple channels simultaneously through its strategic media campaign.

REFERENCES

- Backer, T.E., Rogers, E.M., Sopory, P. *Designing Health Communication Campaigns: What Works*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1992.
- Flay, B., Burton, D. Effective mass communication strategies for health campaigns. In: *Mass Communication and Public Health: Complexities and Conflicts*, C. Atkin and L. Wallack (Editors). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1990, pp. 129-146.
- Hornik, R. Public health education and communication as policy instruments for bringing about changes in behavior. In: *Social Marketing: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives*, M.E. Goldberg, M. Fishbein, and S.E. Middlestat (Editors). Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997, pp. 45-58.
- Lefebvre, R.C., Doner, L., Johnston, C., Loughrey, K., Balch, G.I., Sutton, S.M. Use of database marketing and consumer-based health communications in message design: An example from the Office of Cancer Communications' 5 A Day for Better Health Program. In: *Designing Health Messages: Approaches From Communication Theory and Public Health Practice*, E. Maibach and R.L. Parrott (Editors). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995, pp. 217-246.
- Maibach, E., Cotton, D. Moving people to behavior change. In: *Designing Health Messages: Approaches from Communication Theory and Public Health Practice*, E. Maibach and R.L. Parrot (Editors). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995.
- Porter Novelli. *5 A Day Research Audit*. Washington, DC: 1995.
- Porter Novelli Press Release. Washington, DC: March 17, 1997.
- Prochaska, J.O., DiClemente, C.C. Stages of change in the modification of problem behaviors. In: *Progress in Behavior Modification*, M. Hershen, R.M. Eisler, and P.M. Millers (Editors). New York: Academic Press, 1992.
- Siegel, M., Doner, L. *Marketing Public Health: Strategies To Promote Social Change*. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen, 1998.
- Strecher, V., DeVellis, B., Becker, M., Rosenstock, I.M. The role of self-efficacy in achieving health behavior change. *Health Education Quarterly* 13: 73-91, 1986.
- Wilcox, D., Ault, P., Agee, W. *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*. New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, Inc., 1998.